

In the Claims:

1. A data management system for identifying patterns in data, the system comprising an analysis engine for analysing relationships between responses made by a user to questions relating to a service or products, in which the analysis engine analyses responses made by a user to one or more constructs.
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2. A data management system according to claim 1 in which analysis of the analysis engine involves a process of fuzzy entailment.
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3. A data management system according to claim 1 in which each construct includes two distinct descriptive terms relating to things provided to users by operators of the system.
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4. A data management system according to claim 3 in which the descriptive terms of each construct represent contrasting opinions of the thing.
5. A data management system according to claim 4 which obtains data from a user that represents a user's opinion of the thing in a range defined by the descriptive terms.
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6. A data management system according to claim 5 in which there is defined a number of discrete selectable steps within the range, that number being referred to as a "mesh".
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7. A data management system according to claim 6 in which the mesh is adjusted in reaction to inputs made by users.
8. A data management system according to claim 7 in which the mesh is iteratively reduced until a minimum mesh value that yields a meaningful result is identified.
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9. A data management system according to claim 1 in which the construct is represented by visual control displayed in a graphical user interface on a computer screen.

10. A data management system according to claim 9 in which the user can input a value representative of their opinion by adjustment of the position of the control.

5 11. A data management system according to claim 1 in which the results of the analysis are used to deduce which items of information will be of interest to a particular user.

12. A data management system according to claim 1 in which the system executes on a server that communicates with a user over a network link.

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13. A data management system according to claim 1 that includes a user data input component that executes in on a remote host system.

15 14. A data management system according to claim 13 in which the data input component is represented in the display generated by a web browser.

15. A data management system according to claim 13 in which the data input component is generated by an applet that is downloaded to the remote host from the server.

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16. A data management system according to claim 1 in which the data is obtained by through use of a repertory grid.

25 17. A data management system according to claim 1 in which incomplete data is processed by matching those parts of the data that are present with characteristics of existing data.

18. A data management system according to claim 17 in which the incomplete data is subject to discriminant analysis.

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19. A data management system according to claim 1 in which data is subject to a process of linearisation prior to its being analysed.

20. A data management system according to claim 19 in which the process of linearisation includes conversion of non-numeric data to a numeric form.

5 21. A data management system according to claim 1 in which users are the customers of a business and the output includes predictive information as to the future purchasing behaviour of the customers.

22. A data management system implemented as a computer software system.

10 23. A computer software product that implements a data management system according to claim 1.

15 24. A network server system operative to serve web pages to remote clients comprising a web server for generating HTML code to be rendered on a remote browser and an analysis server that implements a data management system according to claim 1, the data management system deriving input data from analysis of a user's interaction with one or more rendered web pages.